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E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. SPAIN: OUTLOOK IN THE WAKE OF FRANCO'S ILLNESS

EMBASSY MADRID REPORTS THAT THE PRECEDENTS SET FOLLOWING CARRERO BLANCO'S ASSASSINATION AND DURING FRANCO'S FIRST SERIOUS ILLNESS IN APPLYING THE CONSTITUTION WILL BE HARD FOR POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERS TO IGNORE. MOREOVER, RESPONSIBLE POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERS, WHILE AWARE THAT THE MONARCHY HAS NO BROAD POPULAR BASE, NONETHELESS SEE IT AS ONE MEANS OF PROVIDING A NEEDED SYMBOL OF NATIONAL CONSENSUS. IT IS THUS LIKELY THAT THE SUCCESSION WILL TAKE PLACE IN AN ORDERLY FASHION.

--THE ARMED FORCES CAN BE EXPECTED TO GUARANTEE AN ORDERLY TRANSFER OF POWER, YET OWING TO THE PRESSING NATURE OF THE SAHARAN ISSUE AND OTHER PROBLEMS, THERE MAY BE PRESSURES TO EXPEDITE JUAN CARLOS' SWEARING IN.

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EVEN SHOULD FRANCO SURVIVE HIS LATEST ILLNESS, THE CRITICAL

ACCUMULATION OF UNSOLVED PROBLEMS WILL NO LONGER ALLOW A WEAKENED HEAD OF STATE TO GOVERN EFFECTIVELY. MANY, BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, BELIEVE THE TIME HAS COME

FOR FRANCO TO TURN OVER HIS POWERS--WHICH MAY PUSH ARIAS AND JUAN CARLOS INTO WORKING OUT A DEFINITE TRANSFER OF POWER BY DECLARING HIM INCAPACITATED. (CONFIDENTIAL) MADRID 7327, 10/22.)

2. PORTUGAL: SITUATION DELICATE BUT FLUID

ACCORDING TO CABINET SECRETARY SA MACHADO, AZEVEDO IS IN GOOD SPIRITS AND INTENDS TO CONTINUE HIS POLICY OF SEEKING TO REDUCE THE INHERITED PRO-COMMUNIST POWER STRUCTURE IN "SMALL DOSES." SA MACHADO THINKS IF THE AZEVEDO REGIME CAN SURVIVE THROUGH ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE IN MID-NOVEMBER, IT WILL HAVE WEATHERED THE TOUGHEST PERIOD. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS:

--NEW CIVIL GOVERNORS, THREE SOCIALISTS AND ONE POPULAR DEMOCRAT, HAVE BEEN SWORN IN TO REPLACE FOUR FELLOW-TRAVELING POPULAR DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT MEMBERS DISMISSED OCTOBER 20.

--COSTA GOMES' MEETING WITH SOARES, CUNHAL AND REPRESENTATIVES OF RIVAL RC FACTIONS, IN AN EFFORT TO EASE TENSIONS WAS BAD NEWS FOR THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS, WHO WERE EXCLUDED.

EMBASSY COMMENT: THE OUSTING OF THE FOUR GOVERNORS WAS AN IMPORTANT MOVE IN AZEVEDO'S STEP-BY-STEP EFFORT TO DEAL WITH THE LEFTIST INFLUENCE IN PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL AND MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE. THE COMMUNIST COUNTER-STRATEGY IS TO FORGE A TACTICAL ALLIANCE WITH THE FAR LEFT AND FOSTER "POPULAR POWER" AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. (CONFIDENTIAL) LISBON 6200, 6250, 6240, 10/22.)

3. USUN WILL GET TOUGH WITH THE PORTUGUESE AFRICANS

A CLEAR PATTERN OF SUPPORT FOR THE THIRD COMMITTEE ANTI-CONFIDENTIAL

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SEMITIC RESOLUTION BY PORTUGAL AND ITS FORMER AFRICAN COLONIES HAS PROMPTED USUN TO RECOMMEND THAT EMBASSY LISBON ASK THE PORTUGUESE FOR AN EXPLANATION OF THEIR POLICY. UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED, USUN PLANS TO TELL THE PORTUGUESE AFRICANS THAT THEIR UNPRINCIPLED VOTING CANNOT AVOID INFLUENCING US AID PLANNING. (CONFIDENTIAL) USUN 5237, 10/22.) INGERSOLL

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